



DOLPHIN LOG



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THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL FARALLONES SWIM



Early in the morning: there is still a long way to go, but the sea is smooth

THE STORY OF THE SWIM

By DR. FRED HOWARD

At 12:02 P.M., Monday, August 28, 1967, Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart Evans landed on a rocky beach at Point Bolinas, 13 hours, 44 minutes, and 52 seconds after entering the water at the South Farallone Island, thus becoming the first human being to swim this crossing. His success was based on most outstanding ability, exacting training, and a careful personal organization of the conduct of the swim itself. Those of us who were able to help are proud to have had this opportunity.

Boats

The motor launches Water Queen, Crissy Flier, and Edge-
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FARALLONE SWIMMERS

By DR. FRED HOWARD

I may be leaving out a few who were in the great Farallone race of 1956 or thereabouts, but the principal Farallone swimmers I remember are as follows.

Ray Carmassi, 1955, was a former Dolphin Gate champion. He started at Muir Beach and swam out toward the light-ship. After 5 hours, he became very cold and took himself out. A few weeks later, he crossed the Catalina channel easily.

The 1956 race was won by Myra Thompson, then 18 years old. She got almost to the light-ship in 13 hours, as I remember. Paul Herron, who later made at least one more

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THE STORY OF THE SWIM

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water accompanied the swimmer. Their captains are Chief Warrant Officer Gray, Specialist 4 Randall, and Mr. Maxwell Stevenson.

The Water Queen was lead boat and set the course, the two pilot rowboats, Oyster and Sidney Foster, each carrying two men came next with the swimmer between them. The Sidney Foster took the course from the lead boat, while the Oyster, rowed by veteran Farallones pilot Joe Weiss, watched the swimmer closely. The Crissy Flier carrying additional pilots, pacers, and others remained close behind. The Edgewater, carrying our photographer, Phil Rourke and Coast Guard Auxiliary observer, Rita Banks, cruised along closeby.

Course

The course, date, and time were chosen by Stu after consultation with Captain Gray, Ike Papke, Joe Weiss, and others. The plan was to go in as close to a direct line as possible from the island to Stinson Beach. The tidal time chosen anticipated slack water until the last 7 miles when a weak to moderate northward drift would be encountered followed by the beginning of the flood on nearing the Marin coast. The swim was to start in darkness so that when the going became more difficult, the swimmer would be aided by the sun.

Personnel

In addition to the ships' crews, the following Dolphins and friends were in the company.

Starter and Timer: Jack Gordon.

Chief Pilot: Joe Weiss.

Pilots: Bill O'Brien, Bill Walden, and Hector Valencia.

Chief Pacer: Rudy DeMay.

Pacers: Richard Galton, Duncan McLeod.

Feeder and Pilot: Don Warto.

Public Relations Officer: Andy Franco.

Physician: Dr. Fred Howard.

Conduct of the Swim

The start was at 10:17 P.M. on August 27. The sky was starry and the air balmy. The water was extremely calm. After an hour, high fog came in but lifted shortly after the sun rose. The water remained calm throughout with only moderate swells at the finish. Water temperature was 56 degrees at the start but reached 58 degrees midway in the swim. The swimmer was protected by a coating of marine bearing grease mixed with graphite and shark-repellent. This he applied over a light coating of oil of wintergreen on the chest and large joints.

Sea life at first consisted of a great number of giant jellyfish, up to 25 feet long with powerful stings. It was an eerie sight to look over the side at these ghostly creatures floating by just beneath the surface of the water. A sea-lion swam along for a time and a porpoise was sighted. When Stu was about a half-mile off shore, the Water Queen crew saw a 16 foot shark cross their bow. The Crissy Flier was alerted, but the shark apparently did not care to enter the swim, and was seen no more.

At first Stu swam alone; at 3 A.M. Dick Galton joined him. From that time on, one or more pacers, usually wearing fins and wet-suits, were with him. Don Warto never left his post in the pilot boat and fed the swimmer 7-up and lemon jello as he desired. No other food was used.

The crawl stroke at 55 beats a minute was used except when food was taken. Then he changed to a side stroke, but the swimmer never stopped at all. About 6:00 A.M., while swimming side-stroke, Stu suddenly felt pain in the left shoulder which persisted and hampered his progress to a

considerable extent. The pain responded rather well to aspirin, and no other medication was considered.

At 8:30 A.M. I swam with him and could see that he was not suffering from cold or fatigue but only from the pain and weakness of the strained shoulder. In view of his excellent leg and right shoulder action, I felt that he would probably be able to complete the swim.

At 9:45 A.M., forward progress slowed considerably because of an increasingly strong tidal drift to the north. This not only slowed shoreward progress from 2.0 down to 0.5 knots but also carried the swimmer sufficiently far to the north of Duxbury Reef that plans to land at Stinson Beach, south and east of the reef, were abandoned. Joe Weiss and Hector Valencia scouted the shore in the Oyster and spotted a place where a gap between the rocks showed the way to a possible landing on the point.

Landing was facilitated by a change in the tide from ebb to flow so that the last 1.5 miles of swimming was aided by the current. Were it not for the reef in the way and the swimmer's lame left shoulder, he could have made Stinson Beach in another hour. Hector and I joined Stu and Rudy at the finish. We all swam breaststroke and watched the swells carefully. It was necessary to stop to let two big swells go by and break in front of us. Going through the gap in the rocks, we finally touched bottom, but found the rocky footing so treacherous that we fell and had to crawl towards shore for a few yards before the shale and boulders would let us walk again. Stu felt so elated that he jogged up on the beach like a track man, a feat that was just a little too much for me. A truly great and wonderful swim.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL STEWART M. EVANS

Born August 21, 1926, Dearborn, Michigan.

Raised Newton, Massachusetts from age 2½ to age 18. School: New High School, graduated June 1944. Swam for the Newton YMCA team in 1934, 1944. Events: 50 yd. and 100 yd. freestyle.

Entered US Army Air Force January, 1945, trained as a radio operator. Transferred to Foggia, Italy in February 1946. Swam in the US Armed Forces Mediterranean Swimming Championship, August 1946:—

- a. 880 yd. freestyle — 2nd place
- b. 220 yd. freestyle — 2nd place
- c. 100 yd. freestyle — 2nd place
- d. 100 yd. Breaststroke — 3rd place
- e. 3 meter diving — 3rd place
- f. Breaststroke for 40 yd. medley — 2nd place
- g. 400 yd. freestyle relay — 2nd place.

Discharged from the USAAF October, 1946.

Attended Radio Engineering School, Washington, D.C., 1948 - 1950.

Swam for the Ambassador Swim Club, Washington, D.C.

Enlisted in the US Army November, 1950, entered on active duty, May, 1951. Attended the US Army Signal Corps Officer Candidate School and was commissioned a second Lieutenant March, 1952.

Stationed at the following locations:

- a. 1952-1955 — Redstone Arsenal, Alabama
- b. 1955-1957 — Quemoy and Formosa.

Swam from Little Quemoy to Big Quemoy in the Bay of Hanoi, September, 1955.

- c. 1957-1960 — Fort MacArthur, California.

Swam the Catalina Channel (23 miles) in August, 1959. Time: 20 hours, 56 minutes.

Swam the Salton Sea (12 miles) in November, 1959. Time: 6 hours, 40 minutes.

d. 1961 — Fort Monworth, New Jersey, Career Officers' Advanced Course. Graduated first in the class, received Academic Achievement Award from the Association of the United States Army. Swam for the Fort Monworth Swim Team in the 1st US Army Championships:

- (1) 1500 meter freestyle — 2nd place
- (2) 100 yd. breaststroke — 3rd place
- (3) Freestyle leg of the 400 yd. medley — 1st place
- (4) 400 yd. freestyle relay team — 1st place.

e. 1961-1963, Fort Banks, Boston, Massachusetts.

Swam for the 56th Artillery Brigade Team in 1962 and 1963 in the 1st Army swimming championships:

- (1) 1500 meter freestyle — 4th place
- (2) 100 meter breaststroke — 2nd place
- (3) 200 meter breaststroke — 2nd place
- (4) 400 meter freestyle relay — 3rd place.

f. 1963-1965 — NATO Headquarters, Izmir, Turkey.

Awarded the US Army Soldiers Medal for heroism. An American soldier and two Turkish civilians in a taxi, skidded off the deep end of a pier into 60 feet of water in Izmir Harbor. Major Evans and associates dove for the men.

~~Average visibility on the bottom — 3 inches. The bottom~~
was littered with broken concrete, cables, and other debris. Deepest area search 80 feet.

January 1965 — Present — Presidio of San Francisco. Stationed with the 6th US Army Stock Control Center, COSMOS, as Chief of the Data Transmission Division, and the Plane and Control Branch, Data Processing Directorate.

Swims in 1967:

(1) Aquatic Park to Alcatraz, around Alcatraz, back to Aquatic Park.

(2) Aquatic Park to Candlestick Park.

(3) Golden Gate Bridge to South City by the SF Airport.

(4) San Francisco Lightship to Stinson Beach.

(5) Farallone to Bolinas.

Married to Pauline Tomlinson Evans, February 2, 1963, in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Three children Rebecca, 3 years, 9 mos.; Sharon, 2½ years; Michelle, 11 months.

A son, Stewart J. Evans, 14 years old, from a previous marriage, lives in San Pedro, California.

THE FINISH LINE

By FRAN DEGEAR

It was very flattering that Stu asked George and me to take care of the finish of his Farallones swim. I come from Marin County and know every road, so when Stu pointed out on the chart where he proposed to come ashore I knew exactly what to do. His designated landing spot was on a private road with a watchman at the gate barring the curious. It is so exclusive that certain residents strenuously objected when a plane made an emergency landing there last year;

Armed with a card of introduction I obtained outside, I found myself inside the gate and knocking at the door to what developed to be the home of a most charming and co-operative family, very willing to have our orange banner displayed on their flagpole, with the resulting turmoil of a shattering event.

The Big Swim day arrived and while fixing my birds and feeding my fish the radio reports didn't spur us to immediate action. George had taken the day off. We don't know what happened, but suddenly we were electrified into action.

"Two miles from shore!", the radio said excitedly. To say that I was excited was the understatement of my life.

It is difficult to describe our actions from then on, or just how we arrived in nothing flat over winding roads to the Allen's house at Stinson Beach. I tore my hair out by the

roots en route and died a thousand deaths while breaking all speed records.

Ann ran out when she heard our car. "Oh, there you are!"

Wild eyed and with mouths open we dashed past her to the beach, without breath to answer. Up went the orange banner while I watched the boats through the binoculars. It was very difficult to tell from this location whether they were guiding Stu over Duxbury Reef to our finish at Stinson, or whether he would land north of Duxbury or swim in over Duxbury Reef to Bolinas. I had to make a quick decision, so I gasped:

"Grab the blankets and things — quick!"

We ran to the car, then to the beach with everything needed. It was a wrong move. I had mistaken a small boat for one of ours from the Dolphin Club piloting Stu to shore — but it wasn't.

Again I barked an order like Captain Bligh. Poor George was relying on my knowledge of Marin so again we dashed to the car and I screeched the tires around sharp turns, threw up clouds of dust on dirt roads, but found the exact ~~landing spot in no time at all. It was at the base of a steep cliff, as I had feared. We ran and leaped down one path only to find the ocean up to the cliffs — impassable! We huffed and puffed up again with such speed that my heart began kicking up a fuss and I knew that if I went down again that I would have real trouble ascending.~~

George had to leave me there and go down with the blankets and towels. I gave him one of my parachute flares which he handed to Colonel Conover, Stu's friend. This flare went crazy when the Colonel set it off and zipped past Fred Howard's leg, singeing it! I jogged along the top of the cliff as fast as I could and timed Stu in. Jack Gordon on the Crissy Flier set off his parachute flare simultaneously with mine. My flare not only burned the inside of my hand but nearly started a brush fire. Jack didn't need my signal in broad daylight and so close to shore but if it had been dark he would have. He also was to have signaled to me in case Stu had been picked up at sea, night or day.

Meanwhile, below me on the rocky shore George was plowing through the water, resplendent in International Orange, and bellowing to everyone: "If anyone touches him, he'll answer to me."

He arrived with three minutes to spare and had wind enough to shout encouragement to Stu.

In a wink Stu was there. George grabbed him and held him in a vice-like hug while he and Doc Howard, who swam in with him, wiped him down quickly with towels. They sat him down, swathed in blankets for a rest. Stu's wife helped wrap him up.

Stu later laughingly complained that he though George would never let him go. He didn't realize at the time that his shoulder was hurting so badly. Being squeezed didn't help.

The Army helicopter-ambulance developed battery trouble, after being such a hovering angel during the day, and couldn't take off with Stu. Eight men had brought him up the steep cliff on a stretcher. The crew was very chagrined. Finally Stu was transferred to Colonel Conover's car and was hurried to Letterman for a check-up and rest.

We took Doc Howard, dressed in bathing trunks and shark-repellant with us, picked up the banner at Stinson, and took Doc home. We went to the Club only to discover at the finish of a world-shaking athletic event a Dolphin boat had capsized in the Cove with Jack Gordon and belongings, a rifle, and three other Club participants.

Stu — we who helped you consider it an honor and all of us salute you. There were agonizing and laughable moments at sea and on the finish line — all to be cherished forever.

FARALLONE SWIMMERS

(Continued)

attempt was second with Bill O'Brien rowing for him. Either Bert Capps or Jose Cortinas was 3rd and the other 4th. I think Spike Hernandez also started but think that Fred Rogers did not. In this event there was also a woman who swam both topless and bottomless but only for about an hour. Don Sherwood was in and out in less than 5 minutes.

There was not much action after this until 1956. Myra

Thompson, in an 18 hour effort in 1957 came in sight of Ocean Beach but became exhausted.

A little later Herron tried again. Toufie Blaik tried once or twice, but I can't remember when, except that it was after Herron and before Papke.

Ike made a splendid effort in 1965 coming to about 1.5 miles from Stinson Beach, probably closer to Bolinas. His course was almost the same as Stu's. 1966 was not so lucky weatherwise, and Ike did not get so far. In 1966, Ted Erickson tried twice. In 1966 also saw Lenore Modell, coached by Paul Herron, try twice and get about half-way.